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Book Reviews.

An Introduction to the New Testament. By BENJAMIN WISNER BACON, D.D., Professor of New Testament Exegesis in Yale Divinity School. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1900. ("New Testament Handbooks," edited by SHAILER MATHEWS.) Pp. xv+285.

American biblical scholarship is to be congratulated on having at last produced an introduction to the New Testament genuinely scientific in spirit and method. There has long been a need for such a book as this—a book in English dealing with the subject of New Testament introduction in a modern way. The best German works—Holtzmann's and Jülicher's—are still untranslated, and such English books as there are are hopelessly unscientific and for the most part narrowly apologetic. The present work is of an altogether different type. The author is largely emancipated from bondage to traditional views, and he does not hesitate to handle his sources with the utmost freedom. At the same time he is not in any sense a destructive critic, and his literary and historical criticism is in the main careful and judicious. The chief defect of the book is its brevity. There are so many intricate problems in New Testament introduction upon which the conclusions of scholars vary widely that a mere expression of opinion without an adequate presentation of the grounds on which the opinion rests carries little weight. The book is admirably adapted to acquaint the general reader with the prevailing methods and the most assured results of the modern study of the New Testament, but it will fail to exert the influence upon the progress of investigation which it might, had the author been able to discuss more fully the questions with which he deals. For its brevity the author is not himself responsible. His book is one in a series of New Testament handbooks, and it had to be made uniform in size with the other volumes of the series. And under the circumstances one ought not to complain of the narrow limits prescribed, but rather congratulate the general reader on having put before him in so compact a form work of so high scientific value. The series has its definite place and purpose, which could doubtless not be so well served were the volumes larger and more elaborate, and it is certainly not to be desired that they should be any less fresh and scholarly.

The book is divided into five parts: I, "Criticism and Tradition" — a somewhat unfortunate and misleading title — which deals with the history of the discipline and the formation of the New Testament canon; II, "The Pauline Epistles;" III, "The Catholic Epistles;" IV, "The Historical Books;" V, "The Johannine Writings."

The account of the formation of the canon is interesting and sound so far as it goes, but the influences which led to it are not indicated with sufficient clearness. As it is, the ordinary reader would hardly guess that the emergence of the canon was only part of a general transformation which took place in the second century and which marks an epoch in the history of the church transcending in importance any experienced since.

Turning to the Pauline epistles I am happy to find myself in hearty agreement with most of the author's conclusions. Thus—to mention only a few matters more or less widely disputed—he accepts the South-Galatian theory and makes Galatians the earliest of Paul's epistles. He identifies Acts, chap. 15, and Gal., chap. 2, but recognizes that the decree referred to in the former passage cannot have been adopted at the conference in Jerusalem attended by Paul. He holds the view that Paul wrote four epistles to the Corinthians, finding a fragment of the first in 2 Cor. 6:14—7:1; identifying the second with our First Corinthians, the third with 2 Cor., chaps. 10–13, and the fourth with the remainder of our present Second Corinthians. The sixteenth chapter of Romans is separated from the rest of the epistle and regarded as a note addressed to Ephesus. The authenticity of the pastoral epistles in their present shape is denied, but it is recognized that fragments of genuine Pauline letters underlie them, or at any rate Second Timothy. Otherwise all the epistles that bear Paul's name are accepted as authentic. So far as the epistle to the Galatians is concerned, while agreeing with Professor Bacon that it is the earliest of Paul's epistles, I am unable to accept his opinion that it was written at Corinth during Paul's first stay there and shortly before the epistles to the Thessalonians. It seems to me impossible, as I have indicated in my *Apostolic Age*, that Paul can have seen the Galatians between the conference at Jerusalem to which he refers in chap. 2 and the writing of the epistle. I may add also that the difficulty felt by many scholars in putting the Thessalonian epistles later than Galatians, when they show no trace of the conflict over the law which fills the latter epistle, is greatly increased if they are brought into so close juxtaposition to it. It is interesting to notice that, while agreement has not yet been reached touching the

exact date and place of composition of Galatians, there is a growing tendency to regard it as the earliest of the epistles—witness, for instance, among the most recent writers, Zahn, Rendall, Bartlett, Briggs, and now Bacon.

The epistle to the Hebrews is treated in the same chapter with the pastorals, under the title “Secondary Canon of Pauline Epistles.” Its Palestinian destination is rejected, as is also the equally erroneous idea that it was written to warn its readers against apostasy to Judaism; but, strangely enough, it is assumed without discussion that the traditional view is correct which takes for granted that the epistle was addressed particularly to Jewish Christians—as Professor Bacon suggests to a *συναγωγή τῶν Ἑβραίων* in Rome (p. 165, note). So far as its author is concerned, Apollos is looked upon with most favor, while Harnack’s suggestion of Prisca and Aquila, which came to hand too late to be discussed, is mentioned with rather more consideration than seems necessary. It can hardly be regarded as anything more than a pleasing and ingenious *jeu d’esprit*.

The conclusion that the epistle of James was originally a homily or “a series of somewhat disconnected homiletical excerpts,” that it was written about 90 A. D. by an unknown author, and that the superscription which assigns it to James represents a later conjecture, is undoubtedly sound; as is also a similar conclusion touching the superscription of the epistle of Jude. But the author’s assumption that First Peter is the work of the apostle Peter, even in the most indirect way, I am unable to understand, in view of his own discussion of the question. The sharp alternative of authenticity or pseudonymity is surely not so inexorably demanded by the conditions of the problem as to make the legitimate conclusion from Professor Bacon’s own argument impossible.

In connection with the treatment of the epistolary literature of the New Testament a general criticism seems in place. The immediately practical purpose for which the epistles were written is not always brought out clearly and sharply enough, and as a consequence some of them bear too much the appearance of treatises of general application instead of intensely practical letters called forth by a particular emergency. The author informs us in the preface that the logical analyses of the various books were added at the request of the editor of the series. I am sorry to be obliged to differ with my good friend the editor as to the advantage of such analyses. They seem to me to obscure the real nature of the epistles, and to make their correct

interpretation difficult. The very division of an epistle into a doctrinal and a practical section is, as a rule, misleading, for it suggests a dual purpose on the part of the writer, when, as a matter of fact, most of the epistles are of practical intent throughout. This is true, for instance, even of the epistle to the Hebrews, which is commonly thought of as one of the most exclusively theoretical and doctrinal of treatises.

The treatment of the synoptic gospels, under the head of "Historical Books," is especially thorough and satisfactory. The limitations of space seem to have been less felt here than elsewhere, and we have what is relatively, in spite of its brevity and compactness, the fullest discussion in the book. Chaps. viii and ix are a capital example of condensed presentation of a complicated subject, with sufficient detail to show clearly the conditions of the problem and the critical methods employed. These chapters, and the chapter dealing with the gospel of John, seem to me the most satisfactory in the book. The discussion of the relation of the original apostolic matter in the fourth gospel to the completed gospel is admirable, and constitutes a contribution of real and permanent value. Professor Bacon distinguishes three figures in connection with the production of the gospel: the apostle John himself, from whom much genuine material comes; the original reporter of the apostle's testimony, who is identical with the author of the three epistles commonly ascribed to John; and, finally, the compiler of our gospel and author of the appendix. It is to the second that the Paulinism and Hellenism of the gospel are due, and it is his character that is stamped so controllingly upon the whole; while the third is responsible for the disorder and confusion in which the present recension is involved.

The discussion of the book of Acts, which is properly treated as a part of the synoptic literature, proceeds along the right lines, and the general results are undoubtedly sound, though the treatment is so brief that some of the most interesting and difficult problems are passed without mention. Professor Bacon maintains, as might be expected, that the work was not written by a companion of Paul, Luke being the author only of the diary which was used in the composition of the second part of the book and from which the "we"-passages were taken.

In conclusion I wish to express the hope that Professor Bacon will not stop with this brief and summary presentation of his results, but will publish in the near future a larger work, in which he can discuss the problems involved in a more adequate way. The quality of the

present volume is an assurance that such a work would constitute a notable contribution to the science of New Testament introduction. Even as it is, there is much of suggestion in it for the special student, and no New Testament scholar can afford to pass it by because it is designed primarily for a more general public.

A. C. MCGIFFERT.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.
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The Biblical Theology of the New Testament. By EZRA P. GOULD, D.D. ("New Testament Handbooks," edited by SHAILER MATHEWS.) New York: The Macmillan Co., 1900. Pp. 217. \$0.75.

A pathetic interest attaches to this little volume. Even while it was coming to light through the press, its author was passing into the shadow of death. By Dr. Gould's untimely taking off the church and Christian scholarship lose a servant of uncommon excellence in character, in intellectuality, and in learning.

The volume before us is small, numbering barely 217 pages, but it is by no means slight. On the contrary, it contains some of the author's weightiest work. In these brief chapters one will find the concentrated precipitation of many years' work on the New Testament. Dr. Gould was preëminently a teacher. He stimulated even more than he instructed his pupils; and that his class-room work was rich in instruction many will bear testimony from personal experience.

This book is in some respects strikingly characteristic of the man. Designed as a brief, quasi-popular handbook, it has none of the flimsiness that too often appears in "popular" work. It is immensely suggestive, piquing the mind of the reader to think and inquire, and it is crammed with thought. There is not a line of padding from beginning to end. Though necessarily much condensed, it is singularly clear. Up to the front line of advanced scholarship in his position on critical questions concerning the thought, style, date, and authorship of the various writings in the New Testament, however much he may excite question and, at some points, awaken dissent, the author always has a reason for his position; and, if he does not always convince the reader, he compels him to reëxamine his ground. Dr. Gould writes with the frankness of assured conviction and the fearlessness that supreme regard for truth always engenders. If at times the necessary brevity of treatment pushes him to the verge of seeming dogmatism, he yet is not dogmatic. Through all the book, too, there